

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1805.

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"We, Sir, possess a constitutional army, of any reduction of which I must express my disapprobation, I think, Sir, that army should always be commensurate with what is called the regular military force of the empire, and it was upon that principle that the militia of Great-Britain was, two years ago, increased to 72,000 men. This house, I think, should never forego this constitutional principle, which is the best safeguard of its independence, whether attacked by domestic treason or foreign hostility. I do not see any sound reason for not adhering to the principle of ballot as applicable to our militia force. By relinquishing that you give up, in the present instance, 7,000 militia, without the certainty of raising a single man for general service. The proposal, also, of employing parish officers as recruiting serjeants is, in my mind, not the least objectionable feature of the bill, as, by it you defeat that harmony which it is to be desired may always exist amongst the different orders of the people."—MR. AUDINGTON (now Lord Sidmouth's) Speech, 14th June, 1804. *PARL. DEBATES*, Vol. II, p. 727.

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PUBLIC PAPER.

GEORGE RUMBOLD.—*Note remitted by Sir Arthur Paget, His Britannic Majesty's Minister at the Court of Vienna, upon the Subject of the Deportation of Sir G. Rumbold.*

The occurrence which has lately taken place at Hamburgh, is already too well known to his Excellency the Vice-Chancellor of the Court and of State, for the undersigned envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty to think it necessary, at this time, to state the details of

But however habituated one may be to behold the French government heap violence on violence, and atrocity upon atrocity, the last enterprize is such, that, perfectly convinced that there can be but one manner of regarding and appreciating it, the undersigned would nevertheless think himself wanting to his duty, if he did not solicit the particular attention of his excellency, to a crime revolting in itself, as it is pernicious in its relations with the great interests of the human empire.—The undersigned thinks it impossible that his Majesty the Emperor, in his quality of chief of that empire, could be a tranquil spectator of so audacious a violation of all political rights and decorum; that he flatters himself, that in the present emergency, the known principles and sentiments of his Imperial Majesty will suggest measures conformable to the common interests of all independent powers.—The undersigned seizes this opportunity, &c.—
PAGET.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPERS.

MIDDLESEX ELECTION.—*Petition of certain Freeholders of the County of Middlesex, presented to the House of Commons on the 25th of January, 1805, by Lord William Russell, complaining of the Conduct of the Sheriffs Leighton and Shaw.*

A petition of the several persons, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was delivered at the table, and read, setting forth,

that the petitioners are freeholders of the County of Middlesex, and claim to have had a right to vote at the last election for that county; that at such election Sir Francis Burdett, Baronet, and George Boulton Mainwaring, Esquire, were candidates to represent the said county in parliament; that upon a shew of hands the sheriff James Shaw, Esq. and Sir William Leighton, Knight, declared the majority, on the view, to be in favour of Sir Francis Burdett, but a poll being duly demanded for the said election, the same was granted by the said sheriff, and commenced on the 23d day of July, 1804: that the said poll continued open on the first day till about five o'clock in the evening; that on every other day during the continuance of the same, the poll was kept open seven hours; that on divers days during such continuance, several persons attended at the booth, appointed according to law, to give their votes, and did accordingly declare their votes to be in favour of Sir Francis Burdett, whose names, places of abode, and freeholds, and in whose occupations their freeholds were, were duly entered on the poll, but the sheriff refused to permit the scratches or marks to be set opposite to their names, denoting the candidate for whom they voted, until their title to vote had been examined into, although they offered to substantiate their titles by their oaths, nor would the sheriff allow such examination to take place at the booth, but insisted on their attending in a box, placed in a different part of the hustings, to undergo such examination; and although such persons, in compliance with such requisition, did accordingly attend at the said box, yet the consideration of many votes so circumstanced was adjourned, for want of time, till the days respectively succeeding, and thereby great delay and confusion arose; that in order to prevent the same in future, application was at sundry times, by the agents, friends, and counsel of Sir Francis Burdett, made to the

sheriff of the said county, to keep the poll open longer than seven hours, as by law he was bound to do when upon good and sufficient cause requested so to do: that the said sheriff, at the several times aforesaid, refused to accede to such application; that on the 14th and 15th days of the poll, the said sheriff, together with Newman Knowlys, Esq., who then and there sat as assessor or assistant to the said sheriff, severally, and at sundry times, declared, that if at three o'clock on the said 15th day the votes of any persons that had been before that time objected to should not have been examined, the said sheriff would proceed upon such examination, and determine on the same after three o'clock on the same or the following day; and the petitioners further state, that at three o'clock on the 15th day of the poll, several voters were in attendance at the sheriff's box, in obedience to orders given by the sheriff, waiting to be examined in respect to the titles to their votes, which had been previously entered on the poll, and their votes declared, some for the said George Boulton Mainwaring, but many more for the said Sir Francis Burdett; and the petitioners humbly submit, that if the poll had been cast up at such hour, without any further examination of such voters, the names of such votes ought to have been reckoned and thereby a majority of votes received on the poll declared, as in fact it was, in favour of Sir Francis Burdett; but the petitioners further state, that the poll was not cast up, nor the numbers declared, till the following day, and, in the mean time, the sheriff, in compliance with his aforesaid promise, proceeded to satisfy himself respecting the titles of the voters so previously entered on the poll, and, after such examination, directed marks to be set opposite to their names, some in favour of the said Sir Francis Burdett, and some for the said George Boulton Mainwaring, according to the votes previously given for one or other of the said candidates; that a majority of the votes received on the poll did thereby also appear in favour of Sir Francis Burdett, and the said Sir Francis Burdett ought to have been returned to serve in this present parliament for the county aforesaid; and that the said sheriff, well knowing the premises, did, on the 16th day of the said election, illegally, wrongfully, wilfully, and falsely declare the majority of numbers to be in favour of the said George Boulton Mainwaring, and illegally, wilfully, wrongfully, and falsely, returned the said George Boulton Mainwaring to serve for the said county in the present parliament, although the said Sir Fran-

cis Burdett had a majority in number of votes received on the poll in his favour, and ought to have been returned in the stead and place of the said George Boulton Mainwaring to serve in the present parliament for the County of Middlesex aforesaid; and therefore praying the House to order the said false return of the said sheriff to be amended, by directing the name of the said George Boulton Mainwaring to be erased therefrom, and the name of the said Sir Francis Burdett to be inserted therein in the stead and place of the name of the said George Boulton Mainwaring, and that the House will appoint an early day for taking their petition into consideration, and grant to the petitioners such further relief in the premises as to the House shall seem meet. — *Ordered*, That the said petition be taken into consideration upon Tuesday the 19th day of February next, at three of the clock in afternoon. — *Ordered*, That Mr. Speaker do issue his warrant or warrants for such persons, papers, and records, as shall be thought necessary by the several parties on the hearing of the matter of the said petition.

MIDDLESEX ELECTION.—*Petition of certain Freeholders of the County of Middlesex, relative to the Qualification of Mr. Mainwaring, presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Creevey, on the 28th of January, 1805.*

A petition of the several persons, whose names are thereunto subscribed, being freeholders of the County of Middlesex, and claiming to have had a right to vote at the last election for that county, was delivered in at the table, and read; setting forth that, at the last election of a knight of the shire for the County of Middlesex, Sir Francis Burdett, Baronet, and George Boulton Mainwaring, Esquire, were candidates to represent the same county in parliament; that, on the shew of hands, the then sheriff declared the majority to be in favour of the said Sir Francis Burdett; that thereupon, a poll was duly demanded in favour of the said George Boulton Mainwaring, and was proceeded on from day to day; that, at the close of the said election the said sheriff returned the said George Boulton Mainwaring as duly elected to represent the said county in parliament; that after the demanding the said poll, and previously to the granting thereof, or proceeding on the same, the qualification of the said George Boulton Mainwaring to represent the said county in parliament was requested of him, and the said Geo-

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ing and supplying his Majesty's regular forces. It then states the quotas, which, for this purpose, the several counties are to furnish, amounting, all together, for England and Wales, to 67,285 men. The total number for Scotland, as provided for by a separate act, is, 9,666 men. For Ireland, as provided for by a third act, 10,000 men; making in the whole, an additional force *establishment* of 86,951 men, to be raised by parish officers. The army of reserve was, by this project, melted down into, and immediately, became a part of, the *Parish Army*; so that there was a stock to begin with, amounting to 25,718 men, because, from the 37,725 there had been an enlistment into the regular army amounting to 12,007 men. There then remained, to be raised by the parish officers, 61,233, for the United Kingdom, in order to complete the Parish Army up to its intended establishment. But, in the first instance, and by way of specimen of the effect of the project, Mr. Pitt contented himself with calling for no more men than were wanted to complete the supplementary militia and army of reserve, amounting to about 16,000 men for G. B. and 3,000 for I. Those due to the army of reserve became part of the Parish Army of course, and those due to the militia were now to belong to the same army, the militia being, by this project, to be suffered to waste down to its old establishment, namely, 40,000 men for England, 8,000 for Scotland, and 18,000 for Ireland. Out of this Parish Army, the regulars were to be recruited, to the amount of 9,000 men in a year, but not more; and the vacancies occasioned by this recruiting were to be filled up by future annual applications to the Parish Officers.—Now, then, let us inquire what has been the effect of this grand project of the "efficient" cabinet, with Mr. Pitt at the head of it. Receiving depots were immediately established; and, it will be found, perhaps, that military commissioned officers and non-commissioned officers, either newly appointed, or detached from the line, were provided for the reception of the parish levies. We have all heard, and every one who has been in the country has seen, that there has been a quite sufficient stir amongst the Lords Lieutenant, their deputies, the justices of the peace, the constables, and the church-wardens and overseers. Probably about fifty thousand persons, comprehended under these heads, have been kept in motion by the project, during no inconsiderable part of the last six months. And how many men have they produced towards completing the Parish army? Has every officer produced his man? No: even the Treasury Prints do not pretend, that

50,000 men have been raised. Have 5,000 been raised? Have 500 been raised? Not in England, I verily believe. In Surrey, it is said that 20 have not been raised; and, in Hampshire, I am pretty sure, that the parish officers have *not raised one*. I made inquiries in several parishes in Hampshire, and I could hear of no parish-officer who had attempted to raise men under the act now in question. Supposing, however, that by the aid of crimps and thief-takers, a miserable account of even five or six thousand men should be made up, who is there that must not despise the man that should pretend to hope for any success from this project? The 16,000 men, abovementioned, were to be raised by the parish-officers *immediately*. It was expected and held forth, that this number (the number due by the counties to the militia and army of reserve) would be raised by the time that the first Quarter Sessions should be holden, subsequent to the issuing of the orders to the parish officers. The second Quarter Sessions have now been holden, and, if all parties have done their duty, in obedience to the law, the sum of about 300,000*l.* must be, at this moment, either levied, or in a course of being levied, upon the several counties and parishes, under the name of *finer*! In Surrey, the Inspector made his report to the magistrates, at their last Quarter Sessions, from which report, it probably appeared, that the county had to pay fines to the amount of fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds. The magistrates did not, however, proceed to levy the money; but, adopted the less decisive course of appointing a committee of themselves, to *take the matter into consideration*! This example will, doubtless, be followed in every county in the kingdom; for, it is not to be expected, that the magistrates of every county in the kingdom will hastily come to a resolution to declare their several counties and themselves delinquents. They say, and they truly say, that it is *impossible* to perform the task imposed on them by the legislature; that they have used their utmost exertions; that they, as well as the parish officers, have had incredible trouble and vexation; that there is not the least hope of their ever being able to accomplish the object contemplated by the act of parliament; and, that, for these reasons, the money to be raised upon the counties, as a *fine* for delinquency, cannot be considered in any other light, than that of a partial, vexatious and odious *tax*; to which they might truly add, that this *punishing* of all the parishes in the kingdom, because they have failed in their endeavours to obtain recruits for military service, must have a tendency to render that service still more and more odious

in the eyes of the people. Are the fines not to be levied? Are the provisions of the act not to be enforced? Is another dead letter law thus to be added to the statutes? Where, then, is the *vigour*, where the *efficiency*, of the measure? Mr. Canning thought it quite inconsistent, to argue against the project, as inefficient, at the same time that it was contended, that it would be vexatious, oppressive, and odious: just as if, every measure having these latter qualities must, of course, be efficient! To this Mr. Fox made an answer worthy now of being recalled to the memory of the public. "For my own part," said he, "I wish to give this measure an opportunity of being fully and fairly discussed; and, now that discussion has taken place, I am convinced, that it is one of the most oppressive, as well as one of the most inefficient measures, for the purposes it is intended to effect. Indeed, to speak of the absurdities of the bill in detail would be ridiculous. I just now said, that the bill would be found both inefficient and oppressive. But, then comes the right honourable gentleman with his famous dilemma." "How," says he, "do you make that out? How can the bill be oppressive and inefficient too?" "I say, Sir, the bill will occasion very considerable oppression, without producing any considerable addition to your force. The bill appears to me, in every part of it, full of oppression and injustice, and tending, at best, to a more circuitous mode of recruiting your regular army, than the plan proposed by my right honourable friend (Mr. Windham), and, as such I must continue to give it my determined opposition. "If you throw out my bill, says the right honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer, I shall be sorry; because you and the country will lose a good measure; but you will not thereby be the nearer getting rid of me." A more disrespectful and indecent expression from a minister to a House of Commons I never heard! Is not this bill, Sir, a bill of considerable detail, requiring the general consent and approbation of all ranks of the community? Is it possible, I ask, that this House can so far lose sight of its duty as to send a bill of such unexampled severity and oppression to be executed all over the country, contrary to the opinion of nearly one half of its members? Can such a bill be well executed by a country that disapproves of it? It must be allowed, that the bill, with all the influence of the government, will be carried by only a very trifling majority; and, under such

circumstances, it cannot be executed with that general good-will and general consent, by which only its operations can be rendered beneficial to the country." And, let any Treasury writer deny, if he can, that these opinions have now been fully verified. There are no men raised, worth speaking of; at least, in England, whence the far greater part were expected to come, and must of necessity come, if they come at all; and, who is there that will deny, that the whole kingdom has, by this project, been harassed, vexed, and oppressed?—The writers in pay of the ministry, informed, it is to be supposed, of the failure of the project, have been, for some time past, endeavouring to prepare the mind of their readers for the *come-off*, which the minister intends, perhaps, to have recourse to; namely, that the principal object of the additional force bill was not to raise *men*! What, then, was its object? To raise *money*? That may have been its *real* object; but, that it was not the *professed* object, who, even amongst the ministerial partisans, will be found impudent enough to deny in the face of the recorded parliamentary speeches upon the subject? Mr. Sheridan, in the debate of the 18th of June last, said: "We certainly did look, with no small expectation and anxiety to see what armed Minerva was to spring from the head of this political Jupiter; and, not a little surprised, indeed, were we all, at the sight of this little puny rickety bantling, who, after being sent to the parish nurse, will never have gristle nor bone enough to attain the age of manhood. Who is the man, Sir, that has disappointed the house and the country; but he who has been so vaunting and gigantic in his promises, and so puny and miserable in performance? The *real* object of this bill is *taxation*. It is a farce to call it a bill to raise *men*. It is a bill to tax all the landed property of the country. It is a tax operating in the most unfair and ignoble manner. It goes to enforce confiscation where there is no forfeiture; to inflict fines where there are no offences; punishments where no crimes are committed."* This opinion as to the inefficiency of the project, with respect to raising men, was, over and over again stated by thy opposition, and as often rejected by the then prime minister and his partisans. The present bill, said Mr. Pitt, "is likely to be successful, and attract *men* to enter the regular service. Without, however, attending, in the first instance, to its effect in recruiting the regular army,

* Parl. Debates, Vol. II. p. 735.

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"it will immediately have one beneficial consequence, namely, that of setting free a portion of the regulars, (now locked up in the defensive service) nearly corresponding to the numbers raised."* And this setting free the regulars was to be accomplished by the raising of men under the bill. "The plan," said he, "promises to raise men more expeditiously than any other mode we are acquainted with."† That these opinions were faithfully echoed by the whole of the Treasury Bench it is hardly necessary to state. Let us next see, then, what were the expectations which the ministerial partisans out of doors, endeavoured to excite in the mind of the public. The plan was called by the Oracle (a print exclusively devoted, if not managed, by a close "young friend"), a plan "connecting the best security against our present difficulties with the easiest and most effectual provision for creating a permanent force."—"A measure for creating a never-failing source of supply for the regular army."—"This bill unites mildness with efficiency: it gives full scope to the display of voluntary spirit, and substitutes the exertions of local knowledge, and local influence, for the detestable practice of crimping: it does not leave the rich or the poor to the blind and oppressive chance of a ballot: it does not impose on the one a heavy tax for a bad purpose, the offer of high bounties for substitutes, so hurtful to the regular recruiting; nor does it force away the other from the industrious maintenance of a family into the service of the state; it remits all the former grievous penalties, and levies no fine on any parish but for blameable tardiness or inattention: in short, it shews that the resources of a free government are superior to the harsh mandates of despotism, and that individual liberty may be admirably connected with the surest means of increasing and perpetuating the public strength. Is there any one of those points which can admit of fair and candid controversy? Is there any truly independent member of parliament, any real friend of his country, who can hesitate a moment on which side of the question he ought to vote? When the motives of the present opposition have scarcely a large cobweb to cover them, is there any man, we will not merely say so void of honour, but of common policy, and common sense, as to risk his present character, and future fame, in a

"desperate scramble for places, far, very far indeed, beyond the grasp of a self-deluded party?"—"This is pretty well; but we must hear them, in their triumph, after the last division that took place in the House of Commons relative to this bill. Though the faint echoes of an applauding senate, we cannot restrain our eagerness in giving the nation joy on the decisive triumph, obtained over the efforts of a desperate faction, over all the strength and stratagem of an unprincipled confederacy. The best means of providing for the present defence and future security of the country were opposed, with a view to the overthrow of administration, and to the immediate seizure of power. We leave Mr. Fox to ring the changes on his absurdity, and shall only notice a reply made to one of his futile assertions, that it was money, not men, that the minister wanted. Every body must be struck with the justness of Mr. Osborn's observation, that the bill must have been framed with an opposite intent, as not one shilling could be procured by it, but in the event of not raising the men. The learned Serjeant Best did not escape the keenness of Mr. Canning's remark on his black-letter authorities, and his bringing forward a circulating library of law in support of his opinion. Mr. Canning was not less pointed in his strictures on the inconsistencies of other opponents of the bill, who differed more amongst themselves than with its supporters. Some wished to have a clear stage to erect a new system; others were averse to any increase of the regular forces; and, among a third party, poor deceased ballot had found pangenyrists. Such men, though they might take the same side on a division of the house, must quarrel in the lobby. Brother Bragge and the Doctor were called up by one of Mr. Canning's side glances at their endeavours to atone for the inefficiency of their administration by the vigour of their opposition. But we do not mean to turn their speeches into ridicule: we are rather disposed to leave the poor things in their natural state of obscurity and insignificance."*—"We may be allowed to stop

* See SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS, for 1804; pp. 503, 504, 507, 530, 531, 532; And, indeed, the whole series of articles, upon this subject, comprised between p. 499 and 538. By a perusal of these pages the reader will clearly perceive what were the expectations which the partisans of Mr. Pitt taught the public to entertain from this project.

* Parl. Debates, Vol II. p. 741.—† Ibid, p. 742.

here, for a moment, and ask the "young friend," who wrote this article in the ORACLE, whether he *now* thinks, that "brother Bragge and the Doctor" are such very "poor things." Does he think that Mr. Canning will venture to cast any more "side glances" at the "inefficiency" of the "Doctor's" administration? He may, however, safely "leave the poor things in their state of *obscurity* and *insignificance*;" for, long before now, he has heard, seen, and felt, that they know pretty well how to take care of themselves.—— Upon referring to what was said in parliament, as well as to what was published in the ministerial prints, there can, then, remain no doubt in the mind of any man, that the main object (at least the main object professed) of Mr. Pitt's project was to raise *men* by the means of parish officers; and to raise 16,000 of them, in Great-Britain alone, immediately. Indeed, if the Parish Army was ever to receive the 61,233 men required to complete it to its intended establishment (allowing an annual recruiting therefrom to the amount of 9,000 for Great-Britain with a due proportion for Ireland) must it not necessarily have been expected, that the first half year would have produced from 16,000 to 20,000 men? If this was not the case, when was the Parish Army ever to be completed? And, what was the use of appointing *five or six thousand commissioned and non-commissioned officers* to that Army? Yet, after all this, when we see that all England has not produced, perhaps, a thousand recruits, in virtue of this bill, are we to be told, that the project has *not failed*? Are we to be told, that our military force is in a prosperous way; that it has increased faster during the last six months than it increased theretofore; and that the parliament ought to rest satisfied without any investigation of the subject? Since May last, that is to say, since the formation of the "efficient" cabinet, there may have been about three or four thousand men transferred, by enlistment, from the Army of Reserve to the regular army. The sharp winter and the high price of bread may have driven two or three thousand poor wretches into the hands of the parish officers. The regular army may have recruited a thousand or two of good, stout, hearty men, really disposed to become soldiers. But, all this will be found to fall short of the numbers raised, during the preceding six months, by the "incapable" cabinet; and, assuredly, it falls far short of what is required to make good the consumption of the regular army during the same period; and this, too, at a time when

our affairs so loudly call for an *increase*, a very considerable increase, of our disposable force. But, it is said, that ministers mean to bring forward, amongst their increase, the men enlisted into the *German Legion*, and the *Dutch Troops*, in Demerara and Essequibo! Nay; this is no jest. Nor must we be at all surprized if we see these troops set in the front of the array; though we shall certainly have a right to remind Lord Sidmouth of the 8,000 excellent foreign troops he disbanded at the peace, for believing in the duration of which men were called "nature's fools;" and to remind Mr. Pitt, that he never said a word in disapprobation of the disbanding of those troops. After all, however, what is the amount of our regular force? of our force capable of being employed on foreign service? of our force under regular officers, and under such discipline as inspires confidence? Perhaps it may amount to 50,000 effective Infantry, exclusive of Guards and Artillery, in the whole of the united kingdom. The whole of the Infantry, including Guards, may amount to 70,000 men, perhaps. And, let it never be forgotten, that it is *Infantry*, of which a *warlike* army must ever be *principally* composed. Cavalry and Artillery are equally to be cherished; but, they are useful only when in due proportion to the Infantry, either of an army in the field, or when viewed as part of the military force of a country. With a force, then, of only 70,000, or thereabouts, of regular Infantry in the whole kingdom, we are talking of a grand coalition on the continent of Europe; of conquests beyond the Western main; and we are actually fitting out expeditions! But, we have, in the united kingdom, about eighty thousand militia, and, at home in their feather-beds, 480,000 volunteers! Not half so many, perhaps, of this latter description; and, if we are to judge of what they will do by what they have done at Mount's Bay, Chester, and Knaresborough, a diminution in their numbers will be regarded as having lessened our dangers. In short, it is evident, that we still want *an army*, a real army, a regular disciplined army of Infantry, the most manageable, the cheapest, and the most efficient of all sorts of force; such an army we want, amounting to 150,000 men, in the united kingdom at this moment, allowing 30,000 or 40,000 more for stations abroad; and, this army we never shall have, nor any thing approaching to it, while the present system is persevered in. It is a thing not to be obtained by means such as we have been, and yet are, making use of. The

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objection to an efficient plan has constantly been, as well on the part of the "efficient" as the "incapable" cabinet, the want of time, the press of circumstances. This was urged against Mr. Windham when he expressed his apprehensions relative to the dangerous and lasting competition of bounties that would be created by the army of reserve bill; and the same objection was, in the last instance, urged by Mr. Pitt. They have found time to driel along, from year to year, raising men enough for every thing but the real army; but, to provide for the wants of that service, to establish a force, respecting the efficiency of which neither ourselves nor our enemies could have entertained a doubt, they have never been able to find time!—We have frequently been dazzled with a grand display of *numbers*; and, even since the commencement of the present Session of Parliament, we have heard the boast repeated of 700,000 *men in arms*! These were not, indeed, called *soldiers*. But why, if not for the purpose of amusing and deceiving us, is such boast ever made? If we do not regard them as soldiers, that is to say, men fit to compose part of an army for the purpose of *fighting*, of what avail is it to talk of their numbers? We may as well boast of the possession of an immense number of cats, or dogs, or of horses, as Sir Brook did. And, if we do regard them as soldiers, the fact of our having them is the most scandalous, the most disgraceful to our national character, that can possibly be conceived; for, what is our object in collecting such a number? "To defend our country," answers Sir Baalam. To defend our country against the menaced attacks of Napoleon, who never pretends to possess more than 500,000 soldiers, for the several purposes of attacking us; of keeping Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and Switzerland, in a state of vassalage; of preserving the conquest of Hanover; and of holding the rest of the Continent at bay! The fact, then, of our having 700,000 men in arms for the defence of our country, while we have a navy far superior to that of all the powers in the world united, is a fact, at which, if it were true, a Briton ought to die with shame. But, it is not true. We feel, that the "men in arms," of which our ministers boast, are, with an exception comparatively small, *not* soldiers. They may be men in arms; but, in the force of those arms we place little confidence; for, would it not, with 700,000 soldiers in these islands, and with our fleets riding in the Channel, be an infamy too great to be supported to live under the existence of a law, which provides for the burning of our

ricks, barns, and houses, at the approach of a French army! Yes, we feel, and most sensibly too, that these 700,000 men are not soldiers; and, this feeling operates as a just punishment for our folly and indecision; for paltering with ourselves; for our continually seeking to put a trick upon the world; for our reluctance to do any thing that may look like taking up the gauntlet of the foe, and thereby commit us as to the issue of the contest. Our immense numbers are not only no advantage to us, but weigh against, in the eyes of our enemy, in the eyes of the world, and in reality; for, who does not know, that to render 700,000 men fit to perform real military duty, there must be about 25,000 commissioned officers? Austria and France both together, with all their military schools, with all their fortified places, with all their campaigns, have not so great a number. And, is there any one weak enough to believe, that we can possess them? Leaving the 480,000 volunteers and their colonels out of the account, we have an army of reserve and a militia, both put together, of 100,000 men, which require between 3,000 and 4,000 commissioned officers. Can it be believed, that these officers are easily found in these islands, fit to command men in the day of battle? One of the great injuries that our service experiences is, the robbing of the regular army of its officers, by scattering them about in these inefficient levies; by making them inspectors, receivers, reviewers, and God knows what besides; estranging them from the army, from real military duty and military studies; mixing them with magistrates and parish-officers, with scarlet-clad lawyers, merchants, shopkeepers, and stock-jobbers; making them a sort of mongrel politicians and courtiers, and thus teaching them (what some of them are apt enough in learning) to seek promotion by crawling at the heels of a minister, or a minister's underling, rather than by marching at the head of their corps. How pleasant, should we feel, if, instead of all this bustle and hubbub through the country, about militia and army of reserve and additional force and volunteers; if, instead of all these ballotings and finings, these meetings of lieutenants and deputies and magistrates and constables and churchwardens; if, instead of all this, we had one good army, one war-office, and one system of recruiting? An army in these islands of 150,000 men, all subject to the same laws, the same economical regulations, the same principles of discipline; a compact, steady, obedient body of men, stout in frame and sound in heart, contented with, and even proud of, their profession,

and looking back with contempt rather than with envy to the walks of common life? How pleasant and how secure should we feel under the protection of such a force, wholly composed of our own countrymen, and never disgraced by the association with vagabonds and criminals! How, light too, should we feel the *pecuniary* maintenance of such an army! The money that has been paid for the mere collecting of our present heterogeneous mass of men in arms would have raised an army such as I am speaking of, and would have maintained it for years; to say nothing of the distress, the ruin of poor families, the heart-breaking separations, the constant and universal anxiety pressing upon the mind of every poor man, woman, and child, occasioned by the system we have so long and so perversely pursued. The expense of maintaining inspectors, reviewers, and of travelling, on the part of magistrates, parish officers and others, would have half maintained a sufficient regular army. The very *law expenses* alone would have supported a stout brigade. The charges for the printing of all these acts and explanations and schedules and returns and notices and citations and warrants and the lord knows what would have maintained two or three good battalions. And yet we are to go on! We are to persevere in this system of confusion, vexation, and oppression. Balloting is laid aside; but now we are to have fines. Something or other still to torment; still to alarm in some shape or degree; still to make men hate that which they ought to love, to fear that to which they ought to look for security. —When you develop the evils of this system, you are sometimes reminded of the dangers which political and civil liberty would experience from a *standing army*. These two words are now mere words, mere sound, retaining nothing at all of the sense and meaning of the same words, as made use of when the jealousy of a standing army was first entertained. No, it is, as Sir Robert Wilson observes to Mr. Pitt, from the use of a metal very different from *iron*, that the liberties of England have been endangered; and though that metal itself has been almost completely banished, we have something that would, upon a pinch, most conveniently and efficiently supply its place.

"Blest *paper-credit*, last and best supply!

"That lends corruption lighter wings to fly.

"A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro

"Our fates and fortunes, as the wind shall blow!"

No; it is not force of *arms* that we have to fear; it is the force of *influence*, noiseless influence; it is the force of the bank, the custom-house, the excise-office, that palace

of taxation in the Strand; it is these and *their* standing army, which, including invalids and expectants, amount to not much short of 200,000 men; this is the army, whose invalids are not left to 9d. a day, this is the army whose force our political and civil liberties have to dread. Before men again talk of the dangers, in this respect to be apprehended from a regular army of soldiers, of the strength that I am speaking of, they will do well to point out some instance, in which English liberty has been endangered by such an army; they will do well to seek for some such instances of lawless force, as we have witnessed from the Volunteers at Chester, at Mount's Bay, and at Knaresborough.* Nor are these all. A cautious silence is observed upon the subject; but, there are, or there were, daily such acts committed by armed volunteers, as would, if committed by regular soldiers, have excited a clamour that nothing could have quieted. Yes, this is precisely the system by which arms become dangerous to, and finally destroy, political and civil liberty. A system that confounds the functions, the duties, and the feelings, of the citizen and the soldier, of the civil and military officer; that makes the magistrate a captain, and the constable or parish officer, a serjeant, as far as fierceness and severity go, but not an inch further; while the captain and the serjeant learn just enough from their civil associates to render them lax and remiss in the duties of their station. Can those, who prattle about that "*constitutional*" force the militia, shew me the way in which a regular army could possibly produce in the country so much anxiety, so much real severity and oppression, so much real loss, not of political liberty, perhaps, but of what comes much nearer to every man's bosom, namely, his civil, yea his *personal* liberty? And, do those persons who are for maintaining our present heterogeneous mass of armed men, lest a large standing army should endanger our liberties, recollect, that the Parish army, for instance, is as much

* For an account of the former, see Register, Vol. V. pp. 51 et seq. also p. 86, 87 and 88 of the same volume. Upon the trial of *one* volunteer, found guilty of being concerned in breaking open the jail at Chester, it appeared in evidence, that *more than a hundred* volunteers were in the riot.—For the Mount's Bay affair, see the Advertisement of the Lords of the Admiralty, Vol. VI. p. 950.—And, for an account of the conduct of the volunteers at Knaresborough, see the election-petition now before the House of Commons.

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Boulton Mainwaring was thereby required to swear to the same, according to the provisions of the statute in that behalf made and provided; that, on such request being made, the said George Boulton Mainwaring insisted that the provisions of the said act of Parliament, above referred to, did not extend to him, he being the eldest son and heir apparent of a person qualified by the said statute to serve as a knight of a shire; but, immediately afterwards, the said George Boulton Mainwaring took his corporal oath, in the form, and to the effect, prescribed by the said statute, and swore that he truly and *bona fide* had such an estate in law or equity, to and for his own use and benefit, of or in lands, tenements, or hereditaments, over and above what would satisfy and clear all incumbrances that might affect the same, of the annual value of six hundred pounds, above reprises, as did qualify him to be elected and returned to serve as a member for the said County of Middlesex, according to the tenor and true meaning of the act of Parliament in that behalf; and that his said lands, tenements, or hereditaments, were lying or being within the several parishes, townships, or precincts, of Edmonton and Enfield, in the said County of Middlesex; and that the petitioners are informed and believe, and represent to the House, that, at the time of the said election and return, when such demand of his qualification as aforesaid, was made, the said George Boulton Mainwaring was not the eldest son or heir apparent of any person so qualified as aforesaid to serve as knight of a shire, and then had not any estate, freehold or copyhold, for his own life, or for some greater estate, either in law or equity, to and for his own use and benefit, of or in lands, tenements, or hereditaments, over and above what would satisfy and clear all incumbrances that might affect the same, lying or being in Edmonton and Enfield aforesaid, or either of them, or elsewhere, within that part of Great Britain called England, the Dominion of Wales, and town of Berwick upon Tweed, of the annual value of six hundred pounds, above reprises, as qualified him to be elected and returned to represent the said county in parliament; whereby the said election and return of the said George Boulton Mainwaring were and are void, and the said George Boulton Mainwaring is not capable to sit or vote as a member of the House; and therefore praying the House to take their petition into consideration, and that the House will declare the said election and return to be void, and grant them such fur-

ther relief in the premises as to the House shall seem meet.—*Ordered*, That the said petition be taken into consideration upon Thursday the 28th day of February next, at three of the clock in the afternoon.—

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do issue his warrant or warrants for such persons, papers, and records, as shall be thought necessary by the several parties on the hearing of the matter of the said petition.

MEMORIAL OF SHIP-OWNERS.—*Copy of a Memorial presented to Lord Hawkesbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, relative to the Sequestration of British Ships and other Property in the Spanish Dominions, upon the breaking out of the War, 1796.—This Memorial was presented just after the conclusion of the Peace of Amiens.*

That your memorialists, previously to the Declaration of War on the part of this country against the Crown of Spain, and in full faith of the then existing treaties of peace and commerce between the two countries, and of the security thereby afforded to the persons and property of the subjects of the respective countries, had sent a great number of vessels, the property of your memorialists, freighted with very valuable cargoes, to the different ports and harbours of Spain, for the purpose of disposing of their respective cargoes, in the accustomed way of commerce to the subjects of that country.—That war was declared between the King of England and the King of Spain on the 9th day of November, 1796.—That some time before that event, and while the aforesaid treaties of alliance and commerce between this country and Spain were in full force, the government of Spain published a proclamation, bearing date in or about the month of August, 1796, whereby it was ordained, that an embargo should be laid on all English ships in the ports and harbours of that country.—That your memorialists, and the masters or captains of the several ships or vessels belonging to your memorialists, at that time lying in the ports and harbours of Spain, entertaining no doubt of the safety of the ships and cargoes then under their care, and confiding in the protection afforded to persons and property similarly situated, not only by the law of nature and nations, but also by the stipulations of particular treaties, had taken no steps whereby they might be enabled to elude a sudden embargo, or to obviate the unfortunate consequence of so unlooked for a measure.—That in consequence, therefore, of the aforesaid proclamation, several vessels

belonging to your memorialists, together with their respective cargoes, were immediately seized and detained in the various ports of Spain, and shortly after disposed of by order of the government of that country, whereby your memorialists have sustained great and most grievous inconvenience and loss.—That after the before-mentioned seizure and detention of the said vessels, and before their disposal, your memorialists caused many, though ineffectual representations of the consequences thereof, to be made to the government of Spain, and prayed that restitution of their property might be made to them, in pursuance of the terms of the treaties of amity and commerce then subsisting between the two countries.—That your memorialists humbly conceive the said detention and sale of their property, to be directly against the meaning and intention of many treaties formerly made, and as they presume, then in force between this country and Spain.—That by the 36th article of this treaty of peace, concluded between the late King Charles the Second, and the Court of Spain, in the year 1667, it was provided, “that if it shall happen hereafter, that any difference fall out between the King of Great Britain, and the King of Spain, whereby the mutual commerce and good correspondence may be endangered, the respective subjects and people of each party shall have notice thereof given them in time, that is to say, the space of six months, to transport their merchandize and effects, without giving them in that time any molestation or trouble, or retaining, or embarking their goods, or persons.”—That by the 18th article of the Treaty of Utrecht, it is provided, “That if the disputes which are composed should at any time be renewed between their said Royal Majesties, and break out into open war, the ships, merchandizes, and goods, both moveable and immovable, of the subjects on both sides, which shall be found to be, and remain in the ports and dominions of the adverse party, shall not be confiscated, or suffer any damage, but the space of six months on the one part, and on the other shall be granted to the said subjects of each of their said Royal Majesties, in order to their selling the aforesaid things, or any other their effects, or carrying away and transporting the same from thence, whithersoever they please, without any molestation.”—That in conformity to the said articles, and the reliance placed by your memorialists on the due observance of the terms thereof, the respective treaties in which they are contained, then remaining in full force, and the principle thereof acknowledged, your

memorialists presumed to hope they should have been restored to the full enjoyment of all their property so seized and detained in the ports of Spain, by virtue of the said proclamation. But it was at that time thought proper by the government of that country to pursue a contrary line of conduct; and the afore-mentioned ships, with their respective cargoes belonging to your memorialists were sold, as before stated, and no part of the produce thereof returned to your memorialists.—That your memorialists having thus suffered for many years under the deprivation of a very great and valuable part of their property, have no resource but in the interference and mediation of your lordship, and they are rather emboldened to apply to your lordship on this occasion, not only by the natural justice of their claim to remuneration under the before-mentioned circumstances, and on the ground of the aforesaid several treaties, but also by the express terms of the 14th article of the Definitive Treaty of Peace just now signed between this country and France, conjointly with Spain and Holland.—That by the said 14th article of the Definitive Treaty it is expressly provided, “that all the sequestrations laid on either side, on funds, revenues, and credits, of what nature soever they may be, belonging to any of the contracting powers, or to their citizens and subjects, shall be taken off immediately after the signature of the said Definitive Treaty.” And it is also, by the said article provided “that the decision of all claims among the individuals of the respective nations, for debts, property, estates, or rights, of any nature whatsoever, which should, according to received usages and the laws of nations, be preferred at the epoch of the peace, shall be referred to the competent tribunals; and that, in all those cases, speedy and complete justice shall be done in the countries wherein those claims shall be respectively preferred.”—That your memorialists humbly conceive, that no objection can be urged against the application of the universal principles of justice or the spirit or letter of the afore-mentioned particular treaties to their case, as now laid before your lordship, on the ground of the want of precedent; for your memorialists beg leave to remind your lordship, that at the close of the American war, a great number of owners of British vessels were in a situation exactly similar to that in which your memorialists at present unfortunately stand; their vessels, together with their cargoes, being in the French ports at the commencement of the war; and whilst there, seized, detained, condemned,

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and sold, by virtue of edicts or orders issued by the court of France for that purpose; and on the settlement of peace between the belligerent powers, the government of this country, on a representation made on the part of those British owners, was pleased to interfere, and obtained for them from the government of France, the full value of the property that had been so condemned and sold. That under the aforesaid circumstances, your memorialists must suffer a very great and irreparable loss, unless the government of this country shall be pleased to exert itself on their behalf.—Your memorialists therefore, most humbly pray your lordship to take their case into your lordship's consideration; and that your lordship will be pleased to interfere, on the part of His Majesty's government, and to obtain for your memorialists, such compensation for the before-mentioned detention and sale of their property, as shall be reasonable; or to procure for your memorialists, such other relief, in respect of the matters before stated, as to your lordship's judgment and goodness shall seem meet.—And your lordship's memorialists, &c.

MEMORIAL OF SHIP-OWNERS—*Letter to Lord Hawkesbury from the Agent of the Ship-Owners, dated 22 Dec. 1802.*

MY LORD,—Mr. B—, during the last Sessions of Parliament, had the honour to present to your lordship, on the part of the Owners of sundry British ships which had been seized and detained in the several ports of Holland, France, and Spain, previously to the commencement of the late war with those countries, three memorials, praying your lordship's interference on the part of His Majesty's government with those several powers, for the purpose of obtaining from them some reasonable compensation for the loss and injury sustained by the memorialists, owing to the detention and sale of their property under the orders issued in regard thereto by those governments respectively; and the answer which your lordship was pleased to return to Mr. B— on the subject of those memorials having been communicated by him to the parties interested, they beg leave very respectfully to thank your lordship for the consideration you have had the goodness to bestow upon their case; but at the same time trust your lordship will permit them to express their apprehension from the terms of your answer, that they may have failed to state the nature of their situation with sufficient accuracy, and that you will pardon the liberty which they have presumed to take in suggesting to your consideration such an explanation as they

hope may induce your lordship to afford them that assistance and protection which from the equity and justice of their case they have been led humbly to request from the British government on their behalf.—Your lordship, as it appears to them, may have considered that the ships alluded to in the memorials, were condemned by sentence of the Courts of Admiralty, of the respective countries therein-mentioned, for some cause originating with or after the Declaration of War between the belligerent powers, which would subject them agreeably to the rule of the law of nations to the penalty of confiscation, whereas the property in question had in fact entered into, and was remaining at the respective times of the seizure thereof, in the ports where it was seized in the innocent course of peaceful commerce, and with entire confidence on the part of the British owners; that all their rights therein were intitled to be held sacred and inviolable, a confidence in which they had the greater reason to rely in as much as if a difference of opinion should be entertained as to the general rule of law, applying to cases so circumstanced, when unrestrained by any conventional regulations, but which the memorialists scarcely think can prevail, consistently with justice and equity, still they were entitled expressly to protection in that respect under the faith of treaties in which it had been reciprocally contemplated and agreed between Great-Britain and the several powers to whom those ports belonged; amongst other the provisions and stipulations therein-contained, that in case of any war thereafter breaking out, six months should be allowed to their respective subjects for the removing of their merchandize and effects, or otherwise disposing of them as they should see fit, whereas even before any Declaration of War, solemn or unsolemn, the said ships and cargoes in question were not only detained but sold as stated in the said memorials.—Under all which circumstances it appears to the British owners interested in this unfortunate affair, and as they trust it will to your lordship, that in whatever form, or by whatever tribunal their property was thus ordered to be disposed of, such a sentence cannot be supported as an adjudication duly passed upon the property of the subjects of powers becoming hostile under the circumstances and relations aforesaid, or by which the same can be considered as legally divested.—A very short examination of the dates of these transactions will establish the fact, that the orders of the respective powers of Holland, France, and Spain, by virtue of which the persons applying to your lordship on this

occasion, were deprived of their property, were made and issued, and carried into effect, far within the time allowed for the protection of property, in case of war, by the treaties to which they have taken the liberty to refer; and they look with additional confidence to the event of this application, from your lordship's intimate acquaintance with the law of nations, and the sound principles of natural justice. Humbly presuming to hope, that your lordship will, upon reconsideration of their case, with that condescension and goodness which have always marked your lordship's conduct, be yet inclined to listen to their representation, and to procure them relief, according to the prayer of their memorials, or in such other way as it may seem most expedient to your lordship to be granted with reference to the losses they have respectively sustained. I am, my lord, with great respect, your lordship's most obedient and faithful servant.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

MILITARY FORCE.—Upon this subject, certainly of the first importance, at this time, the public have been anxiously waiting for that investigation which the notified motion of Mr. Windham promised to afford. That motion having, however, been so unexpectedly postponed, some observations, which the motion would, perhaps, have rendered unnecessary, may now, without any impropriety be submitted to the readers of this work.—To come at a fair view of the state of our military means, and to show the inadequacy of Mr. Pitt's project for improving those means, we must first look back at the several steps by which we have arrived at our present situation in this respect. —The moment the late cabinet, under the advice and with the decided and unreserved approbation and support of Mr. Pitt, had concluded the treaty of Amiens, they set themselves to work to reduce our military force, and, we must not forget here, that they have since declared all those to be "nature's fools," who expected that peace to last. That "peace of experiment" was hardly made, however, when they reduced the army, including militia and fencibles, from 250,000 to 126,000 men. Mr. Yorke stated, that 72,000 militia (confining ourselves now to Great Britain) were disembodied, because it was the custom to disembody the militia at the conclusion of peace. For the same reason 20,079 men of the fencible regiments were immediately disbanded. Invalids to the amount of 5,172 men were reduced and scattered over every part of the kingdom, whence, when the signal of war was again given, they were called together,

to their great inconvenience and injury, which must, doubtless, have caused a considerable reduction in their numbers. There were, 7,025 men discharged, of whom no description was given; but, allowing these to have been entitled to their discharge, there were 8,945 belonging to foreign corps discharged, and who did not want their discharge; and, of the cavalry, 10,439 men. Of these two latter descriptions we began to enlist again in *ten months* after the reduction took place; and, the *bounty* including contingencies, of 10,438 men (a number equal to that of the foreign corps and cavalry unnecessarily discharged) cannot have amounted to a sum far short of 500,000!—While this work of reduction in our regular and disciplined force was going forward, the ministers did not, however, appear disposed to neglect that of a different description. So early as the 26th of June, 1802, a permanent code for the *militia* of England and Scotland, introduced by Mr. Yorke, was passed into a law. The number for England was fixed at 40,000 to be augmented, in case of need to 60,000 men; for Scotland, at 8,000 to be, in like case, augmented to 12,000. As soon as the parliament met again, in the autumn of 1802, a militia for Ireland (where the former militia had been completely disbanded) became a favourite object, and, on the 17th of December in that year, an act was passed for raising a militia in Ireland, amounting to 18,000 men; not by ballot, but by a bounty at two guineas each man. This bounty being, upon the approach of war, found to be too little, an act was passed, on the 7th of April, 1803, for allowing a bounty of four guineas each man for this Irish militia, and that, too, at a time, when the bounty for the regular army was still kept down at five guineas.—Soon after, however, the ministers of the "incapable" cabinet, as Mr. Pitt called it, began to see, that, having called out, or ordered to be called out, their militia and supplementary militia, consisting, in the whole kingdom of 90,000 men; having created a competition of bounties, under which the regular army was completely at a stand; having so well succeeded in this, they began to see, after having been told of it a thousand times, that no men could be obtained, or were likely to be obtained, by the ordinary mode of recruiting, for general service, and for submission to regular discipline under experienced officers. They were convinced of this. They acknowledged their conviction. The manufacturers were thrown out of work, yet no regular recruits were raised. The bounties for home service had risen so high, that nothing but downright stupidity could lead

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a wandering lad into the army. But these facts produced no good effect in the minds of the ministers. It never entered into their minds to remove the cause of the evil; to do away the fatal competition by putting a stop to the levies of the supplementary militia, which were then going on: no; but, on the contrary, to increase that competition three-fold, and to render recruiting for the army perfectly desperate, by introducing and passing into a law, the project generally known under the appellation of the *army of reserve*; that mongrel force, to be commanded by regular officers, whose services were without limit, but the service of the men to be limited both as to time and place, five years being the period for which they were to serve, and their engagement being positively *not* to serve any where but in the United Kingdom, and the three islands, Jersey, Guernsey, and Alderney. When asked, why, if they had had a measure like this in view, they did not bring it forward sooner, the ministers answered, that, if they had so done, it would have interfered with the raising of the supplementary militia, though they had been, over and over again, told, that the raising of the supplementary militia would prevent the success of any project more efficient; and, though to this day, much more than one half of the supplementary militia has never been raised at all, we know that the army of reserve act has been carried into effect only in part. This measure was adopted in three acts of parliament, one, for England, passed on the 6th of July, 1803; for Scotland, on the same day; and, for Ireland, on the 11th of that month. The numbers were to be, for England, 34,000, men; for Scotland, 6,000; and, for Ireland, 10,000. Thus, if the whole of the men, intended to be raised by these acts, had actually been raised, there would have been 50,000 more, making, in the whole, 140,000 men, locked up from general service, with the exception of such as might choose to enter into the regular army, after having been enrolled in the army of reserve; and, as they were to receive a bounty for so doing, they must be regarded as being, as far as these acts operated upon them, locked up from general service. The numbers raised for the army of reserve, according to a return laid before the parliament in the month of May last (just before the introduction of Mr. Pitt's project), were as follows: England, 31,758; Scotland, 5,537; Ireland, 8,197. * But, as, when a sportsman tells you of the number of birds

he has *shot*, you must always make considerable allowance not only for those that he could not find but also for those that *flew away*; so, when you hear an army of reserve minister stating the numbers of men he has raised, you must take good care to make a liberal deduction for casualties; that is to say, for men claimed as thieves, &c. by the civil power; and, particularly, for those that have *deserted*.—And here we must stop a little, in order to take a view of the melancholy, the horrid, the disgraceful consequences, of this mode of raising an army. From the return, above alluded to, it appears, that, in England, 31,758 men were raised, under the army of reserve act; that, out of this number, 1,752 had been rejected, or *claimed* by the civil magistracy; and that 4,117 had *deserted*. Out of the 5,537 men raised, as it is called, in Scotland, 161 had been rejected or claimed as above, and 364 had deserted. In Ireland, out of 8,197 men raised, 203 had been claimed, and, 1,170 had deserted. So that the totals stand thus:

Men raised for the army of reserve.	45,492
Rejected, or claimed as thieves,	
&c.....	2,116
Deserted.....	5,651
	<hr/> 7,767
Effective.....	<hr/> 37,725

The *dead* are not noticed. They were not 600 in number; and, besides, that is a head of casualties, to which every description of men is liable, though certainly not in an equal degree. The bounty, at an average of not less than 30 guineas a man, had been paid for 45,492 men, amounting to 1,432,998 l. But, of this money 66,654 l. had been thrown away upon persons unfit for service, or claimed as thieves, &c. &c. by the magistracy; and, 178,006 l. had been bestowed upon wretches who took it merely to desert with it; for, it must be observed, that, the acts began to operate in August, 1803, and that the 5,651 men had deserted before the first of May, 1804, embracing a space of only nine months. The money is, however, nothing in comparison with the disgrace, the infamy, to the army, which must arise from all this desertion. Here is a measure, which had, in the month of May last, produced 37,725 effective men, and which had, during the same space of time, produced 5,651 false oaths; 5,651 acts whereby the perpetrators were, in the eye of the law, put upon a level with felons, and were, upon conviction, rendered liable to be transported, or put to death! And, were we, then, reduced to such

* See this Return: Parliamentary Debates, Vol. II. Appendix, p. lxx.

dreadful, such detestable means, of collecting men together "for the defence and security of the realm?" Can a realm be defended; is it possible for it to be defended, by such means? — In returning to the legislative history of the military force, we find the act of the 27th of July, 1803, commonly called the *Defence Act*, coming just three weeks after that of the army of reserve. We have often enough, of late years, seen acts that were never obeyed; acts which produced only part of their professed effect, and, in some cases, no effect at all; but the act, we are now speaking of, appears to have been intended not to produce its professed effect; but, to operate as a sort of bugbear to drive men into volunteer associations; for, the moment what was thought a sufficient number of those associations were formed, the defence act was suspended, by another act, passed on the 11th of August, 1803, a fortnight after the passing of the act thus suspended. To this latter act, which was intended to exempt persons serving in volunteer corps from being called out to the compulsory training provided for in the *Defence Act*, such an interpretation was given as, by the connivance of the government, made it operate as an exemption also from the ballot for the militia and army of reserve; in consequence of which poor men unable to join volunteer corps were grievously oppressed, and the militia and army of reserve were prevented from being completed according to law; accordingly we find, that, when Mr. Pitt brought forward his project, there was, in those two services, a deficiency of 16,000 men in Gt. Britain, agreeably to that gentleman's statement. With respect to the act suspending the *Defence Act*, there was, however, some doubt as to the exemptions; and, therefore, an act was passed, as soon as possible after the parliament met in the autumn of 1803, clearly and fully providing for those exemptions. This act, commonly called the *Volunteer Exemption Act*, was passed on the 20th of December, 1803. — Thus did the ministers not only take care continually to keep up a competition of bounties, operating directly against the regular recruiting service, but they seemed to be not less anxious to create a competition to operate against every other species of force, the operation always being powerful in proportion to the efficiency and value of the force against which it was directed; the volunteers robbing the militia; the militia, the army of reserve; and all of them the regular army. — Of the volunteer consolidation, several others, it would be particularly mention,

especially as the effect of all of them was the same, namely, to render difficult and almost impossible any further recruiting for the regular army. We are now approaching towards the close of the "incapable" administration, the members of which began to be openly opposed by those of the "efficient" cabinet, in the month of March, 1804. In April the divisions, in spite of the pious supplications to the contrary, began to take place. At this time the "incapable" cabinet, who, in order to prevent the longer continuation of the competition against the regular army, had introduced a bill for the suspension of the army of reserve act, introduced also, at the very same time, a bill for augmenting the Irish militia! This latter bill passed into a law on the 3d of May, 1804, and has generally been called the *Irish Militia Augmentation Act*. The number of men to be added was 10,000, making the whole of the Irish militia amount to 28,000 men. Our establishment for the militia of both kingdoms was already 90,000 men, as we have above seen; and this made up the 100,000 all but two thousand! And, let it just be remembered here, in passing, that Mr. Pitt had, on the 6th of June, 1803, given it as his opinion, that 100,000 militia even for Great Britain alone, could be supported, without any material injury to the regular recruiting! — But, more of this hereafter. — The army of reserve suspension bill was now brought forward; and, it will long be remembered with gratitude by the country, as being the rock, on which the "incapable" cabinet was dashed to pieces. Mr. Pitt wished this bill to be laid aside to make way for the introduction of that famous project, of which we have since seen and heard so much. By this time the eyes of every man in the country appeared to be opened, with respect to the inefficient state of our military force. All were agreed, that we wanted regular soldiers; but the "incapable" cabinet contended, that the way to obtain them was not to reduce the number of our militia, but, letting these remain as they were, recourse ought to be had to the means of raising men for rank; and, in order to facilitate that, to put a stop to the operation of the army of reserve act. The "incapable" cabinet was turned out: the "efficient" one came in, or, rather, was patched up; and, their first measure was the act generally called the *Parish Officer Act*. This act, which was finally passed on the 29th of June, 1804, begins with declaring, that it is expedient that a permanent additional force should be raised and maintained, under regular officers, for the defence of the realm, and for augment-



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under the command of the Crown as a regular army could be? Do they, when they are talking about dangers to the *constitution* from a regular army, recollect how much influence and power is, by the irregular army laws, put into the hands of every man in office, whether civil or military; how much influence and power, heretofore utterly unknown to the people of this country? Do they recollect in how many ways, and in how great a degree, these laws keep every poor man in a state of subjection? and can they, then, insist, that such a system is congenial to the British constitution? As was before observed, it is silent, secret influence, against which we have to guard our liberties. The *patronage* of even the army is a million times more dangerous than its arms; and, how much would this patronage be reduced by the establishment of an efficient army? How would it reduce the number of offices and of officers? How many inspectorship's and receivership's and reviewership's, what thousands of staff it would render unnecessary. A parish-man or militia-man consumes as much bread, wears out as much clothes, and occupies as much room as a real soldier. By reducing our numbers, then, to 150 000 men, what a curtailment would there be in the department of contracts and jobs! Might we not hope to see less upstarts, thus enriched, purchasing votes at an election; bribing the miserable people with the money that they have first robbed them of? In short, on whatever side we view the subject, we find reason upon reason for believing that a change of our military system is necessary to prevent the subversion of our liberties within, as well as to defend them from the assaults of a foreign enemy.—But, it will be said, that, Mr. Pitt has abolished *the ballot*. For the present he has, and that part of his project has my hearty approbation; though, if he does not intend to revive it, it is very hard to account for the sending round of the schedules, relative to the militia, which schedules have, within these two months, been served upon every house-keeper in the country, and have had the effect of *driving* a considerable number of men back into the *volunteer corps*! And, it is difficult to conceive, that, while Lord Sidmouth and his friends make a principal part of the Cabinet, the balloting and other parts of that system will be laid aside. The *Courier*, a newspaper now devoted to Mr. Canning, does, indeed, contend, that Lord Sidmouth is *nothing* in the Cabinet. The passage is curious enough to be quoted. “For some time we have heard reports “of Mr. Canning’s intention to resign.

“The coalition press has been particularly “directed against him for acting under Mr. “Pitt with Mr. Addington, as if the coalition had reason to suppose they would be “more successful in their attacks against “Mr. Canning on this ground, than against “others. But surely Mr. Canning *cannot* “be dissatisfied at the manner in which Mr. “Addington and his friends return to office? “They return *vanquished*, not triumphant. “How, then, can he be dissatisfied with the “present cabinet? *Little as he thinks of Mr. “Addington*, surely he will allow him talents sufficient to be *president of the council*? To pursue Mr. Addington *further*, “looks like personal malice; it looks as if “Mr. Canning wished to persecute him “from private resentment, not to exclude “him on public grounds. Mr. Addington “and his friends came to the Pittites *fallen*, “*vanquished* opponents; they *kiss the rod*, “and accept of such things as Mr. Pitt in “his bounty shall be pleased to give. What “could be more triumphant or satisfactory “than this?” (*Courier* January 31.) The *Sun*, well known to be the leading Pitt newspaper, had the following passage on the 28th of January: “If some of our “observations be not quite palatable to the “friends of the late cabinet, the fault is not “with us; for a premeditated attack, if we “felt any disposition to make it, we should “not think that *the persons alluded to* were “of sufficient importance in the eyes of the “country to procure us readers for our observations upon their conduct.”—Notwithstanding this affected contempt, however, the public must be well convinced, not only that “Mr. Addington” (the Pittites have never yet called him by his new title!) is not fallen; that he does not come a vanquished opponent; that he does not kiss the rod; and, they may be assured, that he will maintain his opinions relative to our military force, which opinions will be found clearly expressed in his words, taken for a motto to this sheet, and, in which opinions, it must be confessed, he has hitherto maintained a perfect consistency. Not so Mr. Pitt. To hear Mr. Canning, one would have imagined that Mr. Pitt had *always disapproved* of the ballot, and of locking up our men in the defensive system of militia and army of reserve. “My right honourable friend,” said Mr. Canning, “when he came into office, “found, that the ballot had done as much as “it could: he found the regular army too “small, and the militia *larger* in extent than “was fairly compatible with the means of the “country.”* “Those who have witnessed

* Parliamentary Debates, Vol. I. p. 719.

"the distress and misery, which the ballot has given rise to, cannot, I conceive, be adverse to the abolition of that system."* Mr. Pitt, in the same debate, called, "the recruiting by ballot and compulsion an exploded and oppressive system."† Now, who would not suppose, that Mr. Pitt had always been opposed to the system of balloting, and of raising so many men for home service? Just the contrary! He had constantly been the advocate of the whole of that system. Of the yeomanry, volunteer, and quota system he and Mr. Dundas were the fathers. In every stage of the formation of our force during the present war, he had been the defender of the militia and of every measure tending to lock men up from general service. "If," said he (in alluding to a speech of Mr. Windham) "I had to state here my objection" (to the army of reserve bill) "it would not be, that the militia was too much: I think that a militia to this extent" (including the Supplementary militia, making, for Great-Britain, 72,000, and for Ireland, 18,000 men) "we can bear. We know that we have raised 100,000 men by ballot. To this militia may, too, I should think, be added another force for home service or we shall not be in a state of security."‡ But, it was not only once or twice; it was upon every plausible occasion that he held the same sentiments, and generally conveyed in language, which, towards his opponents, would be thought very little short of contemptuous. At last, however, he "found, upon coming into office, that the ballot had done as much as it could; he found the regular army too small, and the militia larger in extent than was fairly compatible with the means of the country;" though, observe, the militia did not yet amount to within 9,000 men of the number which he had asserted the country could bear without any material injury to the recruiting for general service; and, observe, too, that this assertion was made, after the army of reserve bill was introduced in to parliament, and while it was experiencing his support! And, when did this modest and consistent gentleman discover that the ballot produced "distress and misery"? When did he discover, that it was "exploded and oppressive"? He had uniformly maintained the contrary. When, then, did he make the discovery? "Upon coming into office"? Why could he not

have discovered it before? The fact is, that he retained his opinion relative to the ballot even till after he had introduced his grand project. Nay, the ballot made part of that project, as described in his speech of the 25th of April (Parl. Deb. vol. II. p. 277); it was continued in it after the House went into a committee on the amendments to the bill, as will appear from his speech of 5th June (Deb. vol. II. p. 486); just as the bill was about to be sent to the Lords, on the 18th of June, he came with an amendment to strike out the ballot! (Deb. vol. II. p. 742.) — What consistency, what wisdom either in invention or execution, we have to look for from such a source, the public are left to judge. [The length of the foregoing remarks, which it was impossible to abridge, must be my apology for not noticing the Middlesex Petitions, and several other topics.]

THE POLITICAL REPTILE.

Of certain kind of Worms, 'tis said,
If you divide the tail and head,
They'll twist about awhile, and then
Their sever'd parts Unite again.
'Tis hence, perhaps, Dan Pope affirms,
That Placemen, one and all, are worms,
A doctrine that so well applies
To two, we've now before our eyes;
Of whom the one was styled by some
Irreverend Wit, the other's Bum;
If so, we need no longer wonder,
That, having late been chopp'd asunder,
They should rejoin, and be once more
The animal they form'd before.
Now though, 'twixt these, no doubt prevail,
On which is head, and which is tail,
A question is propounded whether
The hand which splic'd their ends together,
May not have, in the operation,
Revers'd of each the former station;
Hence, that the dull and heavy lump,
Which heretofore composed the rump,
Has happened, in this tortuous race,
To Crawl into the foremost place,
The Head, with all his boasts and bragging,
Behind his brainless neighbour lagging.
Another line some Doctors take,
And hold this Worm to be a Snake;
Of which, all Naturalists have said,
It is the tail that guides the head;
And though its crest on high it bears,
And rear itself aloft in air,
Or fiercely dart, it's foes among,
The venom of a pointed tongue,
Yet all philosophers concur,

(So weak and helpless it's condition.)

It wants the power one inch to stir,
Unless by Sovereign Rump's permission.
John Bull, Beware, nor put thy trust
In things that creep, and lick the dust,
Avoid this serpent, who, depend on't,
Is of the OLD ONE a descendant;
Call forth thy strength, an effort make,
Nor only "Scorch, but Kill" the Snake;
And "Bruise his head" lest soon thou feel
The Cursed Reptile "Bruise thy heel."

* Parl. Debates Vol. II. p. 720. † Ibid. p. 743. ‡ Ibid. in Register, Vol. III. p. 793. See also his speech of the 23d June, 1803: Register, Vol. III. p. 1835 et seq.

✂ The Spirit of the PUBLIC JOURNALS, for 1804, is now published.